

Amendments to the Claims

Listing of Claims:

1. (cancelled)
2. (currently amended) A system for managing telephone service for a plurality of persons sharing a common telephone line based on determining whether a person sharing the common telephone line is at the location served by the common telephone line, comprising:
 - for each person, a transmitter adapted to accompany the person and periodically emitting a unique signal;
 - a base station at the location served by the common telephone line and containing a receiver;
 - said base station further containing a processor;
 - a base station database containing, for each person, at least one unique record, said unique record corresponding to said person and correlating said unique signal emitted by said transmitter to said unique record in said base station database;
 - the base station database further containing at least one record setting forth a specialized telephone service associated with at least one person sharing the common telephone line;
 - a telephone connection over the common telephone line from the base station to a local telephone network controller; and
 - a network database maintained by said local telephone network controller, said network database containing a plurality of network database records, each of said network database records corresponding to a telephone number in a local telephone network and one of the network database records corresponding to the common telephone line;
 - wherein said signal emitted by said transmitter is of sufficient strength to be received by said receiver only when said transmitter is in close proximity to said receiver; and
 - wherein when said base station receives said unique signal from said transmitter, the base station processor makes an entry in the base station database record corresponding to said transmitter, recording a receipt of said unique signal;
 - wherein when said base station fails to receive said unique signal from said transmitter for a predetermined period of time, the base station processor makes an entry in the base station database record corresponding to said transmitter, recording a failure to receive said signal;

wherein, upon detecting a change in at least one of said records in said base station database, the base station initiates a telephone call to said local telephone network controller, uploads said base station database into the network database, and thereafter disconnects said telephone call, thereby updating said network database to record whether each of said persons sharing the common telephone line is or is not at the location served by the common telephone line and to update records of specialized telephone service associated with at least one person sharing the common telephone line; and

wherein the telephone network controller determines how to provide services to the persons sharing the common telephone line in accordance with the updated network database records by checking the updated network database for the existence of records of specialized telephone service associated with at least one person, and if there are specialized telephone services associated with at least one person, checking the updated network database to determine if the person associated with the specialized telephone service is at the location served by the common telephone line.

3. (previously presented) The system according to claim 2, wherein the transmitter is in the form of a card that fits into a wallet.

4. (previously presented) The system according to claim 2, wherein the transmitter is in the form a fob that can be attached to a keychain.

5. (previously presented) The system according to claim 2, wherein the receiver is contained in a base station combined with a telephone into a single unit.

6. (previously presented) The system according to claim 2, wherein the receiver is contained in a base station comprising a self-contained unit separate from a telephone.

7. (previously presented) The system according to claim 2, wherein said network database is utilized to determine the identity of a person being called who is sharing the common telephone line and further to provide specialized telephone services in accordance with the updated network database records to said person whose identity is determined.

8-10. (cancelled)

11. (original) The system according to claim 7, further comprising the use of voice recognition means for identifying the person being called.

12. (original) The system according to claim 7, further comprising the use of touch-tone means for identifying the person being called.

13. (previously presented) The system according to claim 7, wherein the local telephone network controller permits an incoming telephone call to the common telephone line to be completed only if an identified person being called is determined by the network database records to be at the location of the common telephone line.

14. (previously presented) The system according to claim 13, wherein, upon a determination that the identified person being called is not at the location of the common telephone line, the local telephone network controller returns to a caller a signal indicating that a telephone is ringing without being answered.

15. (previously presented) The system according to claim 13, wherein, upon a determination that the identified person being called is not at the location of the common telephone line, the local telephone network controller automatically transfers a caller to a voice mailbox.

16. (previously presented) The system according to claim 13, wherein, upon a determination that the identified person being called is not at the location of the common telephone line, the local telephone network controller automatically transfers a caller to a predetermined alternative telephone number.

17. (previously presented) The system according to claim 13, wherein, upon a determination that the identified person being called is not at the location of the common telephone line, the local telephone network controller permits a caller to select another person sharing the common telephone line.

18. (previously presented) The system according to claim 7, wherein the local telephone network controller permits a call waiting signal to be delivered to the common telephone line only if an identified person being called is determined by the network database records to be at the location of the common telephone line.

19. (previously presented) The system according to claim 2, further comprising a database of at least one subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line shared by a plurality of persons that have restrictions on outgoing telephone calls, and

further comprising, for each of said subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line shared by a plurality of persons, a list of at least one restricted outbound telephone numbers permitted to be completed by at least one required person but not all of the plurality of persons sharing the common telephone line,

wherein an outbound telephone call from one of said subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line to one of said restricted outbound telephone numbers for that common telephone line can be completed only if the required person is determined by the database records to be at the location of the common telephone line.

20. (previously presented) The system according to claim 19, wherein the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers associated with the common telephone line is maintained within the base station.

21. (previously presented) The system according to claim 20, wherein said list of restricted outbound telephone numbers associated with the common telephone line is uploaded to the local telephone network controller whenever there is a change to said list of restricted outbound telephone numbers.

22. (previously presented) The system according to claim 19, wherein the database of subscriber telephone numbers that have restrictions on outgoing telephone calls and the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers associated with each of said subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line shared by a plurality of persons is maintained within the local telephone network controller.

23. (original) The system according to claim 22, wherein the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers is updated by telephoning a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

24. (original) The system according to claim 22, wherein the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers is updated by electronic mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

25. (original) The system according to claim 22, wherein the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers is updated by mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

26. (previously presented) The system according to claim 19, comprising:
means for determining whether an outbound telephone call is from one of said subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line that has restrictions on outbound telephone calls,
means for determining whether an outbound telephone call on the common telephone line is to one of said restricted outbound telephone numbers, and
means for determining whether said at least one required person is at the location of the common telephone line,
wherein the telephone network controller permits completion of said outbound telephone call only if said at least one required person is at the location of the common telephone line.

27. (previously presented) The system according to claim 2, further comprising a database of at least one subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line shared by a plurality of persons that have restrictions on inbound telephone calls; and
further comprising, for each of said subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line, a list of at least one restricted inbound telephone numbers permitted to be completed to at least one required person but not to all of the plurality of persons sharing the common telephone line;
wherein an inbound telephone call to one of said subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line from one of said restricted inbound telephone numbers

can be completed only if the at least one required person is determined by the database records to be at the location of the common telephone line.

28. (previously presented) The system according to claim 27, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers for the common telephone line is maintained within the base station database.

29. (previously presented) The system according to claim 28, wherein said list of restricted inbound telephone numbers for the common telephone line is uploaded to the local telephone network controller whenever there is a change to said list of restricted inbound telephone numbers.

30. (previously presented) The system according to claim 27, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is maintained within the local telephone network controller database.

31. (original) The system according to claim 30, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by telephoning a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

32. (original) The system according to claim 30, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by electronic mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

33. (original) The system according to claim 30, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

34. (previously presented) The system according to claim 27, comprising:
means for determining whether an inbound telephone call is to one of said subscriber telephone numbers corresponding to a common telephone line that has restrictions on inbound telephone calls,

means for determining whether an inbound telephone call to a common telephone line is from one of said restricted incoming telephone numbers, and

means for determining whether said at least one required person is at the location of the common telephone line,

wherein the local telephone network controller permits completion of said inbound telephone call to the common telephone line only if said at least one required person is at the location of the common telephone line.

35. (previously presented) The system according to claim 28, wherein, upon a determination that said at least one required person is not at the location of the common telephone line, the local telephone network controller plays an announcement to a caller explaining that said inbound telephone call cannot be completed.

36. (previously presented) The system according to claim 28, wherein, upon a determination that said at least one required person is not at the location of the common telephone line, the local telephone network controller returns to a caller a signal indicating that a telephone is ringing without being answered.

37. (previously presented) The system according to claim 28, wherein, upon a determination that said at least one required person is not at the location of the common telephone line, the local telephone network controller automatically transfers a caller to a voice mailbox.

38. (previously presented) The system according to claim 28, wherein, upon a determination that said at least one required person is not at the location of the common telephone line, the local telephone network controller automatically transfers a caller to a predetermined alternative telephone number.

39. (previously presented) A system according to claim 2, further comprising a database of telephone numbers for emergency service providers, wherein the local telephone network controller always permits a telephone call from at least one of said emergency service providers to the common telephone line to be completed.

40. (previously presented) A system according to claim 2, further comprising a database of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers, and
further wherein the local telephone network controller always permits a telephone call from a telephone number on said database of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers to be completed to the common telephone line.

41. (original) A system according to claim 40, wherein said database of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers is maintained within the base station.

42. (original) A system according to claim 41, wherein said list of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers is uploaded to the local telephone network controller whenever there is a change to said list of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers.

43. (original) A system according to claim 40, wherein said database of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers is maintained within the local telephone network controller.

44. (original) The system according to claim 43, wherein said database of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by telephoning a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

45. (original) The system according to claim 43, wherein said database of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by electronic mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

46. (original) The system according to claim 43, wherein said database of unrestricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

47. (withdrawn) A system for indicating that a transmitter's battery power is low, comprising a transmitter that emits a unique signal to a base station receiver within a home, wherein said transmitter emits a signal to indicate a reduced strength of a battery powering said transmitter.

48. (withdrawn) The system according to claim 47, wherein said base station indicates said reduced battery strength via a flashing light on the base station.

49. (withdrawn) The system according to claim 47, wherein upon receipt of said signal indicating that said transmitter's battery power is low, the base station receiver initiates a wire telephone call to a local telephone network controller and uploads information regarding said reduced battery strength to the local telephone network controller, and further wherein upon receipt of said information, the local telephone network controller initiates a telephone call to a household member associated with said transmitter to inform said household member of a need to replace said battery.

50. (currently amended) A system for restricting completion of a telephone call from a common telephone line shared by a plurality of persons to permit said telephone call to be completed only when a required person is present, comprising:

- a transmitter accompanying the person and periodically emitting a unique signal;
- a base station at the location of the common telephone line and containing a receiver;
- said base station further containing a processor;

- a base station database containing at least one unique record, said unique record corresponding to said person and correlating said unique signal emitted by said transmitter to said unique record in said base station database;

- the base station processor being arranged to make an entry in the base station database record that corresponds to said transmitter, recording a receipt of said unique signal;

- the base station processor being arranged to make an entry in the base station database record that corresponds to said transmitter, recording a failure to receive said signal for a predetermined period of time;

- a telephone connection from the base station over the common telephone line to a local telephone network controller;

- a network database maintained by said local telephone network controller, said network database containing a plurality of network database records;

- the base station processor being arranged, upon detecting a change in at least one of said records in said base station database, to initiate a telephone call over the common telephone line to said local telephone network controller, to upload said base station database into the network

database, and thereafter to disconnect said telephone call, thereby updating said network database;

a database in the network controller of at least one subscriber telephone numbers that have restrictions on outbound telephone calls;

for each of said subscriber telephone numbers that have restrictions on outbound telephone calls, a database list in the network controller of at least one restricted outbound telephone numbers;

the network controller being arranged, when an outbound telephone call from one of said subscriber telephone numbers is made to one of said restricted outbound telephone numbers, to check the network database to determine whether the outbound telephone call is from one of the subscriber telephone numbers that has restriction on outbound telephone calls;

when an outbound telephone call from one of said subscriber telephone numbers is determined to be from one of the subscriber telephone numbers that has restrictions on outbound telephone calls, ~~means for checking~~ the network controller being arranged to check the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers to determine whether a number being called may be completed only if at least one required person is present;

wherein, when it is determined that a number being called may be completed only if at least one required person is present, the network controller is arranged to check the updated network database to determine whether said at least one person is present; and

the network controller being arranged to permit said restricted outbound telephone call to be completed only if said at least one required person is present.

51. (previously presented) The system according to claim 50, wherein the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers is maintained in the base station database.

52. (currently amended) The system according to claim 51, wherein the base station processor is arranged to upload the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers over the common telephone line to the local telephone network controller whenever there is a change to the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers.

53. (currently amended) The system according to claim 50, wherein the list of restricted telephone numbers ~~is maintained~~ is arranged to be updated within the local telephone network controller.

54. (previously presented) The system according to claim 53, wherein the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers is updated by telephoning a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

55. (previously presented) The system according to claim 53, wherein the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers is updated by electronic mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

56. (previously presented) The system according to claim 53, wherein the list of restricted outbound telephone numbers is updated by mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

57. (currently amended) A system for restricting completion of a telephone call to a common telephone line shared by a plurality of persons to permit said telephone call to be completed only when a required person is present, comprising:

a transmitter accompanying the person and periodically emitting a unique signal;

a base station at the location of the common telephone line and containing a receiver;

said base station further containing a processor;

a base station database containing at least one unique record, said unique record corresponding to said person and correlating said unique signal emitted by said transmitter to said unique record in said base station database;

the base station processor being arranged to make an entry in the base station database record that corresponds to said transmitter, recording a receipt of said unique signal;

the base station processor being arranged to make an entry in the base station database record that corresponds to said transmitter, recording a failure to receive said signal when said base station fails to receive said unique signal from said transmitter for a predetermined period of time;

a telephone connection over the common telephone line from the base station to a local telephone network controller;

a network database maintained by said local telephone network controller, said network database containing a plurality of network database records;

the base station processor being arranged, upon detecting a change in at least one of said records in said base station database, to initiate a telephone call over the common telephone line to said local telephone network controller, to upload said base station database into the network database, and thereafter to disconnect said telephone call, thereby updating said network database;

a database in the network controller of at least one subscriber telephone numbers that have restrictions on inbound telephone calls;

for each of said subscriber telephone numbers that have restrictions on inbound telephone calls, a database list in the network controller of at least one restricted inbound telephone numbers;

the network controller being arranged, when an inbound telephone call to one of said subscriber telephone numbers is made from one of said restricted inbound telephone numbers, to check the network database to determine whether the inbound telephone call is to one of the subscriber telephone numbers that has restrictions on inbound telephone calls;

when an inbound telephone call to one of said subscriber telephone numbers is determined to be to one of the subscriber telephone numbers that has restrictions on inbound telephone calls, ~~means for checking~~ the network controller being arranged to check the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers to determine whether a number being called may be completed only if at least one required person is present;

wherein, when it is determined that a number being called may be completed only if at least one required person is present, the network controller is arranged to check the updated network database to determine whether said at least one person is present; and

the network controller being arranged to permit said restricted inbound telephone call to be completed only if said at least one required person is present.

58. (previously presented) The system according to claim 57 wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is maintained within the base station.

59. (currently amended) The system according to claim 58, wherein the base station processor is arranged to upload said list of restricted inbound telephone numbers ~~is uploaded over the common telephone line~~ to the local telephone network controller whenever there is a change to said list of restricted inbound telephone numbers.

60. (currently amended) The system according to claim 57, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is ~~maintained~~ arranged to be updated within the local telephone network controller.

61. (previously presented) The system according to claim 60, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by telephoning a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

62. (previously presented) The system according to claim 60, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by electronic mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

63. (previously presented) The system according to claim 60, wherein the list of restricted inbound telephone numbers is updated by mail to a customer service department within a local telephone network provider.

64. (previously presented) The system according to claim 57, further comprising means for playing an announcement to a caller explaining that said inbound telephone call cannot be completed if said at least one required person is not present.

65. (previously presented) The system according to claim 57, further comprising means for returning to the caller a signal indicating that a telephone is ringing without being answered if said at least one required person is not present.

66. (previously presented) The system according to claim 57, further comprising means for automatically transferring a caller to a voice mailbox if said at least one required person is not present.

67. (previously presented) The system according to claim 57, further comprising means for transferring a caller to a predetermined alternative telephone number if said at least one required person is not present.